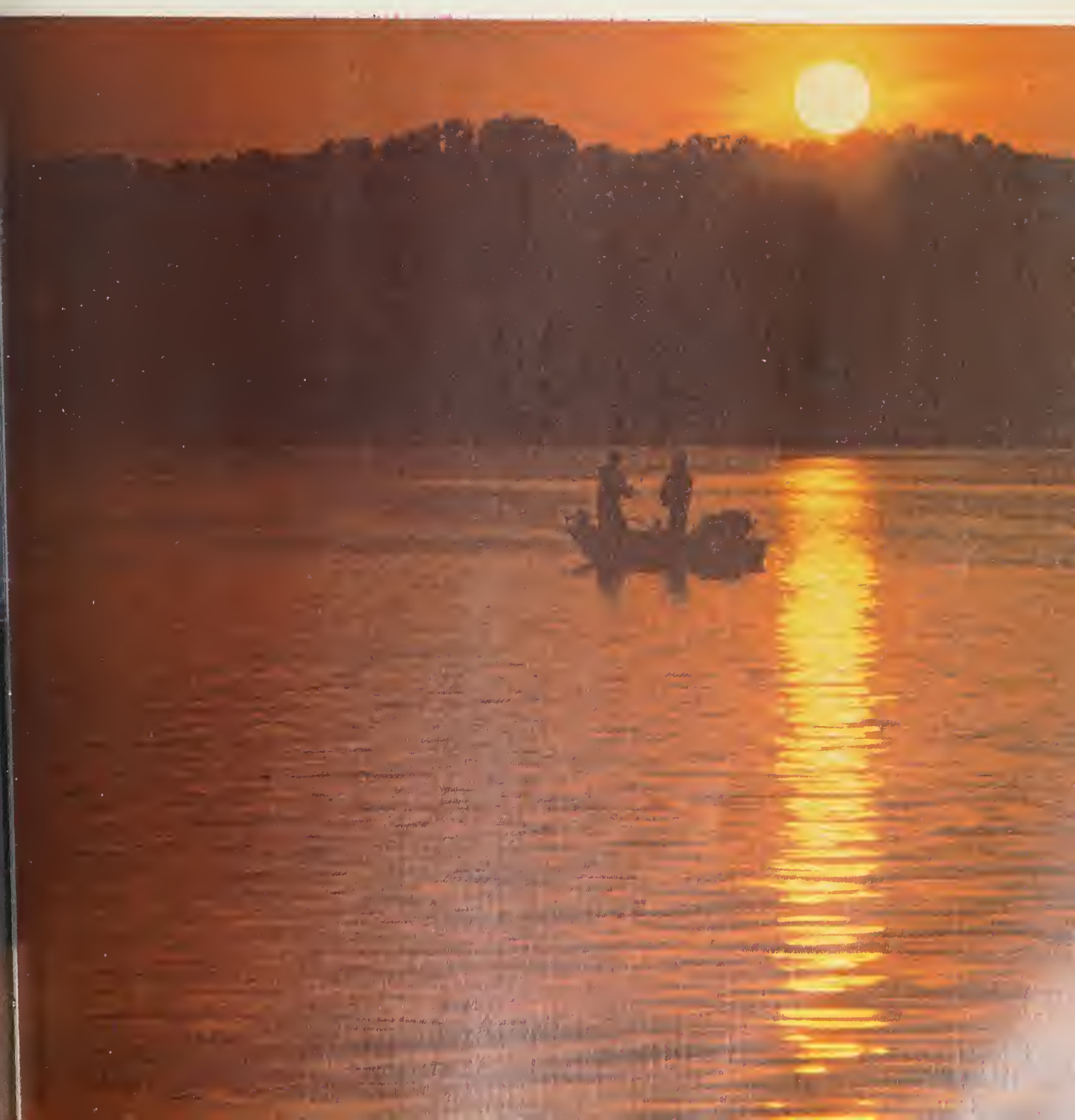
Carolina Country

AUGUST, 1974



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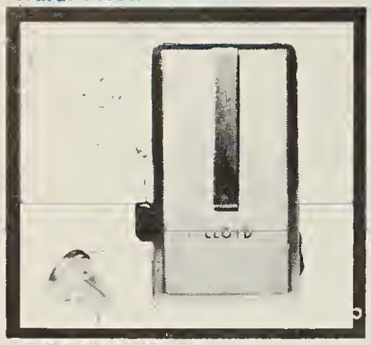

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VER — The scene might be at any the popular, large lakes in North olina created in connection with generation of electric power, and picture's title could be "Casting at set." Actually, the picture shows a of anglers casting for schooling fish at TVA's Cherokee Lake in Tennessee Valley. It originally eared in *Tennessee Valley Perspec-* a quarterly magazine published the Tennessee Valley Authority. *olina Country* is indebted to J. th Wilkerson, Perspective's editor, ermission to reprint it. It reminds f sights we've seen often at Kerr .

Month . . .

OUR AND YOUR GOVERNMENT
FLATION
AMILY IN A SQUEEZE
IE CAROLINA HOMEMAKER
EN ROUNDTABLE
STERS FOR EVERYONE

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A Very Serious Sickness

On July 2, the day this issue of *Carolina Country* went to press, the C.D. rate on the New York money market topped 12.10%. This means some New York city banks were pledging to pay investors able to put $100,000 or more into certificates of deposit for 30 days or more 12.10% interest.

The abnormally high rate is symptomatic of a very serious national sickness. It's called **inflation**, and it's ravaging the national economy.

Inflation is raging out of control, and nobody seems able, or willing to accept responsibility for doing what is necessary to bring it under control.

It is one reason, along with soaring fuel costs, that electric consumers are paying more, and will have to pay even more in the future. It is directly responsible for the excessive cost of home financing. It is central to the soaring cost of everything and the plight of people increasingly unable to make ends meet.

The consumer-owners of electric cooperatives in North Carolina represent a cross-section of North Carolina's citizenry and taxpayers. They don't have $100,000 to capitalize on 12.10% C.D. rates. They don't as average Tar Heels, have tax-shelters and the like to take advantage of tax loopholes. As in the case with other average Tar Heels, just about everything, and in many instances all, they make goes for housing, feeding, clothing, and educating their families.

Anything that increases their basic expenses hurts.

As the owners of electric cooperatives which buy power wholesale from the major power companies, they've been hurt and will be hurt more by increases in the cost of wholesale power. In the latest inflationary development of immediate concern to them, Carolina Power and Light Company filed with the Federal Power Commission for both rate increase and a fuel clause. The rate increase will raise co-op power costs about 70%, the fuel clause an additional 60%.

Historically, inflation has led inevitably to economic calamity. Given the present lack of federal policy and controls, that will happen again. The balloon has got to burst.

Certainly, inflation no longer can be ignored in Washington. We hope the citizens won't ignore it as an issue when they go to the polls in November. For that reason, we urge citizens to let candidates know they are concerned about inflation and to vote that concern November 5 in the General Election. To vote, you must be registered. The deadline for registration is October 7. Don't assume you're registered. Check and be sure you are.

Jim Chaney

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YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMEN

A Report by Rep. Roy A. Taylor, 11th District

This is the last in a series of messages prepared for *Carolina Country* by members of North Carolina's Congressional delegatio

As the Eleventh District's Congressman, Representative Taylor serves the people of Avery, Buncombe, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, McDowell, Macon, Madison, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Transylvania and Yancy counties. His home address is Black Mountain. He has a district office in Asheville.

As Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation in the U.S. House of Representatives, much of my time involves planning and considering legislative proposals relating to the Nation's outdoor recreation needs and programs.

Today, America's National Park System includes nearly 300 areas located in every region in the country. We all admire the spectacular scenery of the Grand Canyon, the unequalled splendor of the redwoods and the magnificent wildlife of Alaska's Mount McKinley National Park. But which areas in the national park system do we most use?

For North Carolinians and millions of other Americans the Blue Ridge Parkway, Cape Hattera National Seashore, and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park offer outstanding outdoo recreation opportunities. For many Carolina families, visits to Moores Creek or Guilford Courthous National Military Parks and the Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site serve the dual purpos of putting them in touch with their heritage and providing an opportunity for a family outing.

My point is that our areas close to home are those we are frequently able to use and enjoy. Nortl Carolinians, particularly those in rural areas, are fortunate in having so many natural an recreational values close to home. We have been working on some new approaches to protect thes resources.

One of the most innovative legislative programs developed in recent years was the Wild an Scenic Rivers Act. The Chattooga River in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia wa recently added to this system. By its term, land acquisition by the federal government is minimized The river is maintained for its natural values, but farming along its valley is left undisturbed an families are not displaced. At the same time, the river can be enjoyed by everyone for fishing an boating.

Another major factor affecting our outdoor recreation opportunities is the Land and Wate Conservation Fund. The Act established a fund whose income is now primarily derived from federa offshore oil leasing. Sixty per cent of this fund is used to help State and local governments acquir and develop local outdoor recreation resources. These funds are matched dollar for dollar, so that community allocating money for outdoor recreation can often receive Federal funds for qualifyin projects. Since most of this comes from depleting a Federal Resource (oil) it seems appropriate tha the revenues should be reinvested in a lasting resource for the American people. In Nort Carolina, smaller communites have been able to acquire and develop recreation facilities through th use of this fund. We hope to expand this program and hearings are planned in July on suc legislation. I believe this type of a Federal program encourages local initiative and is a mos worthwhile concept for meeting our future recreation needs.

North Carolinians are blessed with a state containing a rich variety of outdoor recreatio opportunities. For many of us with a rural background, an appreciation of our great outdoors and a its opportunities is almost taken for granted. My commitment in Congress is to be certain that ou children -- and their children after them -- have opportunities, as we do, to enjoy a wide range o outdoor experiences.

INFLATION

How High Before the Balloon Bursts?

Rising costs and other aspects of inflation are eroding the financial resources of citizens of every level of income. Consumers and producers alike are hurting, and there is no relief in sight. *Carolina Country* has gone to the grassroots to assess what is happening in rural North Carolina. Last month, it reported how the "Big Squeeze" is affecting farmers. In this issue, it reports other implications of the "Big Squeeze" and what inflation is doing to rural electric consumers and their cooperatives.

By Jim Chaney

"Inflation is hurting everybody. The only resistance to it is not to buy anything. I need a new pair of shoes. I'm not buying them. But people have to have electric service, and here at the co-op we have to buy the things we need to provide it for them.

G. Leslie Rucker.

"A large percentage of our receipts are from people who are receiving Social Security benefits, I don't see how these people can subsist in inflation. When you talk about a rate increase, the first thing I think of is how are these people going to pay it. Our number one problem is not so much the financial status of the cooperative as how can we maintain an equitable relationship with the member."

L.P. Beverage

Les Rucker and Bill Beverage aren't merely philosophizing. Rucker is general manager of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, Tarboro. Beverage is general manager of Four County EMC, Burgaw. They were expressing a concern shared by electric membership corporation managers throughout the state.

"Hot Air Balloon." MacNelly of Richmond News-Leader shows what's happening.

In an economy in which the cost of nearly everything is soaring uncontrolled to ever higher heights, in which interest rates have broken records and fuel prices are matched only by big oil monopoly profits, consumer-owned electric cooperatives and their members are caught, like the farmers, in the Big Squeeze.

> "Inflation, reducing the penny's usefulness, sets the Treasury considering whether to mint a new coin. It would have a value between the penny and the nickel — two cents or two and a half." From *The Wall Street Journal.*
>
> "We could call it a 'pickel,' which would also describe our economic situation. Or a 'ninny,' which describes the people who are responsible for it." From letter in *TIME.*

By July, inflation had reached the dimensions of a national fiasco, and Washington was doing little more than letting it run its course. Indeed, an Administration spokesman admitted in an interview it was unlikely the levels reached would be reduced. The only encouragement he offered was the opinion that the rate of inflationary increase would lessen.

"Inflation," Cecil Viverette, general manager of Blue Ridge EMC, Lenoir, said, "is the most insidious of all economic ills. It builds upon itself and adversely affects the poor and the fixed income people the most.

"The only weapon an organization like ours has to fight it with is improved productivity and greater operating efficiency. This is at best a

temporary holding action. There must be mandatory controls in key areas to bring inflation under control. Only Congress can act to do this."

The government had wage-price controls in effect for a time, but they were so poorly conceived and ineptly administered that the political strategy seemed directed to discrediting them.

"The inflationary prices of everything are in general outstripping wages and income," H.H. McKinney, general manager of Pee Dee EMC, Wadesboro, said. "This is true for practically all employed people, but particularly so for persons on limited or fixed incomes. It's true for the agricultural segment of the economy. There seems to be an almost universal attitude in the business world of 'I'm going to get mine while I can.' I hate the thought of another depression, but it seems to me a day of reckoning has got to come."

"It's nationwide," L.T. Gibbs, general manager of Rutherford EMC, Forest City, said of the inflationary chaos. "The greatest effect is in the higher cost of wholesale power." That, he pointed out, affects every electric cooperative in North Carolina and, consequently, every co-op member.

"One of the biggest things that perturbs me," John Darlington, general manager of French Broad EMC, Marshall said, "is the huge windfall profits the major oil companies are making. This has an effect on the entire economy because oil is used as energy or as a raw material in virtually every industrial and manufacturing process. The basis of any consumer product is the energy and raw materials required to make it."

The consumer has no protection against oil industry abuses, Darlington added, and won't have unless the federal government acts.

"Another thing that perturbs me," Darlington said, "is high interest rates. Up to a comparatively few years ago, the maximum legal rate was 6%. The limit was removed which means the ordinary person can't afford to borrow for his needs."

Vernon E. Taylor, general manager of Roanoke EMC, Rich Square, spoke of the "dilemma" inflation has created for electric cooperatives.

At Roanoke EMC, first quarter 1974 expenses were up over first quarter 1973 as follows: wholesale power by 33%, materials and supplies by from 7.5% to 75%, and labor by 8%.

"In the final analysis," Taylor pointed out, "the cooperative must pass these increases on to its member-consumers. The real pity of this situation is that many consumers are tied to fixed or dwindling incomes and have no one to whom they in turn can pass on their cost increases. Thus our major porblem is not how the cooperative can continue to meet the demands of inflation, but how it can do so and still meet the needs of this type consumer within a non-discriminatory rate structure."

"We will not be allowed to discriminate against those better able to pay by giving a lower rate based on abilit to pay to those less able," Taylo explained. "This is a real dilemm because both groups deserve an equ chance to remain part of this cooper tive."

At Dobson, Kelly Hutchens, gener manager of Surry-Yadkin EMC, pu inflation in this perspective:

"The thing that has hurt us s much is how much more we have t pay for materials and supplies. Infla tion is eating us up.

"We have quite a few people wh are dependent on farming. They ar suffering, and retired people and othe people on fixed incomes are very har hit."

What has happened to the cost o just one basic item, Hutchens sai

"The Fuse Is Burning Short"

More so than business executives generally, EMC managers put their consumers' interests foremost. This was clear in replies *Carolina Country* received from managers in inquiring about inflation. The following reply, from Gilbert L. Whitley, general manager of Pitt & Greene EMC, Farmville, says that for all of them.

I'm a "child" of the Great Depression. During the "Roaring 20's" people were saying "This will last forever." Those recollections are burned indelibly in my memory and, surely, they influence my thinking a lot.

One lesson I learned was to do without things I couldn't pay for. So, I agree with Les Rucker that we must learn to "make do" with what we have. Reduced consumer demand will "cool it" somewhat. It will also cut down on the "fast-buck" artists now operating in our economy.

Ever since World War II, I've thought there would come a "day of reckoning," resulting from deficit spending on the part of both Government and individuals. This is well enough when you're buying property, such as houses and electric systems, which will afford long-lasting benefits. Other than that, I feel it's sure to catch up with you, sooner or later.

It now looks as if the fuse is burning short. Before the inflation problem is solved, I feel that business, labor, government and the general public, may all have to "bite the bullet" some. There are occasional indications that the situation may be improving. I hope so.

The old-time radio stations used to preface a controversial speaker's remarks with "The opinions expressed here are those of the speaker and are not necessarily those of the management." What I've said may not reflect the views of some of our members, the board or our other employees.

I shudder to think of the possible increases in cost of electric service to our members. So many have depended on it and some may not be able to afford it. I'm especially thinking of those on fixed or limited incomes.

The cost of everything our co-op buys is increasing constantly. The same thing is happening to our members including, especially, the farmers. I hate to see us pile increased costs for electric service on all the others, but we're one of the EMCs facing the possibility of a "hefty" increase in wholesale power cost next year. There's nowhere else for it to come from.

Gilbert L. Whitley, Farmville

tells what inflation has done to the prices of materials and supplies: A transformer that cost $150 last year may range up to as much as $250 – and more.

His wholesale power costs, always a big expense, have become even bigger. In June 1971, he said, it took 38 cents off every dollar in revenue to pay the wholesale power bill; now it takes 50.

"And," he added, "this is going to continue to climb with the fuel clause."

Les Rucker had figures to show how much fuel clauses and "pass-throughs" involve: Between May 1973 and May 1974, the cost of wholesale power his EMC buys from VEPCO rose 87.5%.

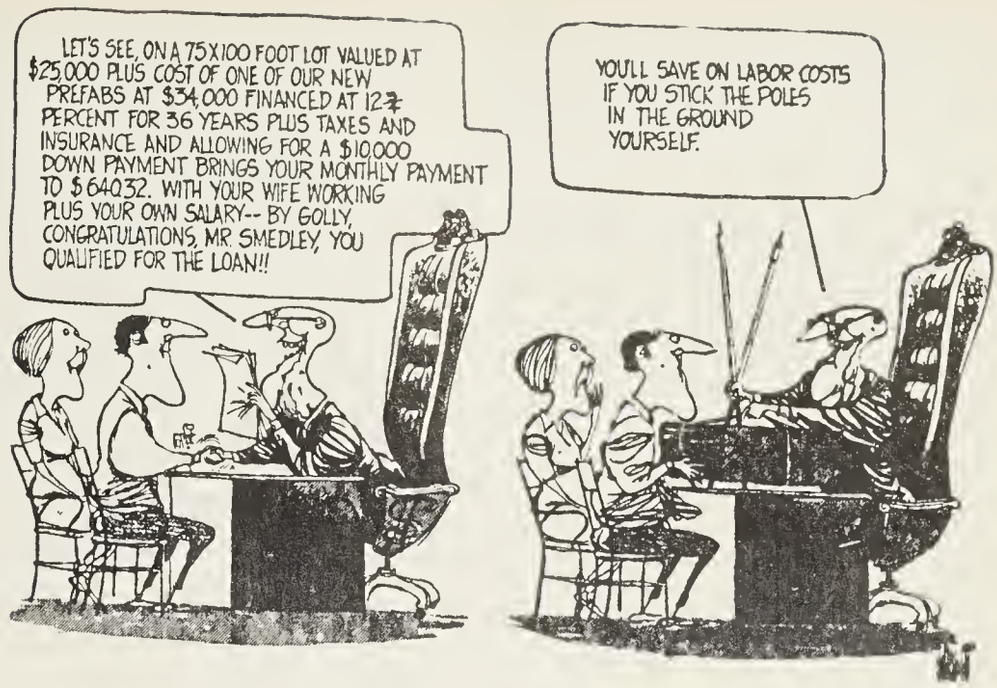
"Most of the increase is due to fuel clause charges," he said. "We're passing them on to the member, and it's really burdensome to everybody."

In May 1973, wholesale power purchases accounted for 39.38% of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC's total operating expenses. By May 1974, that percentage had "jumped" to 55.17. "And," Rucker commented, "we're helpless to do anything about it."

The blow is yet to fall as heavily on EMCs which buy power principally from CP & L. At Wake Forest, Wake EMC general manager Douglas P. Leary said the rate Wake paid in June was 15.5% higher than in 1970. But CP & L has a new wholesale rate increase in the works. The increases CP & L has put into effect for retail consumers, and the additional retail revenue it is seeking, indicate the wholesale rate increases will be hefty. And a fuel clause is certain to be sought as well.

B.F. Morton, general manager of Carteret-Craven EMC, Morehead City, agreed the impending CP & L increase will intensify pressures.

"Although our retail rates have not changed since 1971 despite increase power costs and soaring prices of everything we need to render adequate and dependable electric service," he said, "1974 may be just a year to be remembered for a long time . . . There is no doubt in my mind that our retail rates to our member-consumers will be much higher in the future. We can somewhat control our material and supplies costs, but we would have no control over our power costs once the rate has been established and approved."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YOU'LL SAVE ON LABOR COSTS IF YOU STICK THE POLES IN THE GROUND YOURSELF.

Wright in The Miami News

Inflation: Wright of Miami News portrays impact on economic and moral values.

Inflation. Spiraling costs on the one hand, shortages on the other, the consumer paying more for everything. Robert Holmes, general manger of Tri-County EMC, Goldsboro, saw it getting worse before it gets better.

"In our case," he said, "we have been making real effort to hold all of our rates at the 1971 level when we had a 16% increase – the first and only rate increase in the history of our cooperative. Since 1971, though, poles have increased 139%, wire about 110% transformers about 35%, with these and other items still going up and up – when you can get them at all.

"Next year, there's the additional factor of a new wholesale power contract coming up. There is not only the evil of inflation but also the critical shortages of materials. Somehow, the inflation and the shortages seem linked together.

"I can only interpret from it all a reduced standard of living in the long run."

It seems clear to me that the energy planners' "plan" is to allow the prices of energy and energy resources to continue to run rampant to the point that people can't afford them. In other words, let supply and demand solve the energy shortage by letting prices become so exorbitant that fewer people can afford energy related products, then the demand for fuels and on utilities construction programs, for example, will be much lessened and everybody lives happily ever after. The only thing wrong is that the poor working man again comes out on the short end.

It's not enough to defend the rising cost of electricity by saying "everything else is going up." The American public is getting tired of the lack of control on prices. In the utility industry every effort is being made to lessen demand for the product, but conservation, research with other forms of energy such as solar, new patents in lighting, etc. are already creating a static or negative growth pattern in some instances, and no utility can survive with that type of financial base.

Edward E. Brown Jr., general manager, Albemarle EMC, Hertford.

Waging War on Inflation

By Owen Bishop

The modest farm, situated just off an unpaved road in rural Wake County not far from Wake Forest, bears little resemblance to a battlefield.

Yet, it is here that the Doug Darch family is waging a valiant battle in the nation's War on Inflation.

The Darch farm is one of thousands of tiny battlefields scattered across North Carolina and the rest of the country—wherever American consumers are fighting for survival in an era when wages cannot rise fast enough to keep pace with inflation.

Like their fellow Americans, the Darches were drafted to serve in this "war" brought on by a spiraling cost of living index, now up about 15 per cent since last year.

But Mr. and Mrs. Darch are veterans in a sense for they are attacking the enemy inflation by using the same strategy and the same weapons which have seen them though other skirmishes over the past 22 years as they've struggled to build their dairy operation into a thriving business while also rearing six children.

Their strategy is simple: careful planning both on the farm and in the home, wise and frugal spending striving for as much self-sufficiency as they can attain.

Their weapons are just as simple: long hours and hard work.

"To meet the problems of inflation, we're just having to work longer and harder than ever," Darch said.

"I've found that my experience with the farm has been pretty much a matter of going from one crisis to another. Inflation is just one more crisis. It's just one more of the parts of our environment. We simply have to change with it."

He pointed out that Man has always survived by "being able to adapt to his environment. So, if inflation is simply another factor of our environment, we are going to have to adapt to it as long as it persists. And I think we're going to be stuck with it for quite awhile."

Darch readily admits that inflation creates problems, but he also believes it opens up new opportunities.

"As long as you can manage to solve the problems and take advantage of the opportunities, you can ride it. This means you have to be smart and adapt ; you have to be selective in the way you buy and sell, You have to ge the best use from your resources including time."

Darch said he's not sure that he an his family are adapting successfully but pointed to some of the effort they are making in that direction.

When he bought nitrogen fertilize in June, he paid $135 more per to than he paid a year ago. To adapt t this situation, he has found ways t reduce the amount of fertilizer h uses.

"There are several possibilities—yo can use animal wastes, which contain nigrogen; you can plant legumes suc as alfalfa and clover and shorten u the rotation so you're able to use th nigrogen from the legumes."

Another option is using the fert lizer more selectively, taking full a vantage of the fertility "ban account" which the soil has built u

"We've always kept our soil at high state of fertility, so this ye we're putting out only half to tw thirds of the major nutrients and all the minor nutrients."

As a milk producer, Darch mu operate under the price regulatio established by the State Milk Commi sion. But he feels the current price which were raised last November, a fair.

With inflation, he said, "there's lot more money going through m hands; all I have to do is figure o some way to make more of it stick

The Darches recently found ther selves confronted by one of those ra opportunities which occassionally cr up.

It involved a couple of silos whi had been abandoned on the site of old farm which was being convert into a residential development.

"The kids said we ought to b them and use the materials to build swimming pool," Darch recalled.

He contacted the landowner a arranged to buy both silos for t grand sum of $20. The catch was th the Darches had to take them do and transport the materials to th farm.

"When we were taking them do

Mr. and Mrs. Doug Darch with daughter Laura

it was obvious to me that the material in one of them was in very good shape, so I thought it would be a waste to build a swimming pool out of a good silo. To me, this was one of those opportunities that come along, so we grabbed it."

One of the silos was reassembled at he Darch farm, with the materials rom the second one being set aside or future use in that swimming pool.

The Darches hadn't planned to uild a second silo until this opportuny presented itself, but Doug said they an certainly make use of it.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Darch has been pitalizing on some opportunities of a ry different nature.

"I went to buy curtains for the throom," she said "and they were so pensive that I bought a sheet inead. I made curtains out of the sheet d had enough left over to make a ock for Laura (the Darches only ughter), using some other material at my mother had given me.

"I still have some of that sheet left d I'll use it with another piece of terial that I got on sale last week to ke something else. I'm going to get ite a bit out of that one sheet."

In running the home, Mrs. Darch ds that inflation has made her more ective in her shopping than she's r been before, whether she's lookfor groceries or clothes.

"I really go hunting for sugar at the t price, I'll tell you that. And I ally go to one of those thrift stores bread because we eat quite a bit of t here."

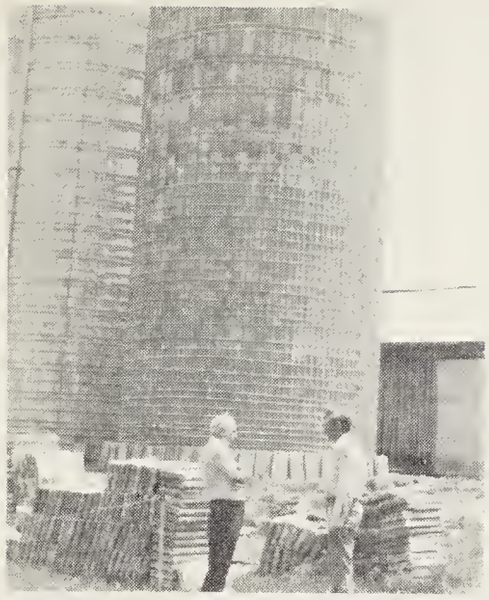
She said she "has always" done a of canning of vegetables from the ily garden and she has routinely le many of the family's clothes– shirts and pants for the boys.

"I've always done this and I ect to keep on doing it."

This year, she tried her hand at ing bathing suits.

"The kids couldn't find what they ted, so I made them. You can do it heaply."

The Darch children, who have been tal part of the family's economic include Douglas, Jr., 22, who's in the Navy; Lee, 21 who'll be lling this fall at the University of gia to study veterinary medicine completing three years at N.C. University; Ted, 19, a rising



Doug Darch discusses silo-building operation on his Wake County farm with L.K. Stephenson, director of member services for Wake EMC.

sophomore at East Carolina University; David, 17, a rising senior in high school; Laura, 12; and Glenn, 9.

"The boys have always helped out, Mrs. Darch said. "They've all driven school buses and so far the older ones have earned their own money for college."

The boys and their father have handled most of the maintenance and repair work around the farm. And they also help with general care of the cattle.

Even Laura shares in the farm's chores, although she hasn't been expected to follow the example of her brothers when it comes to rising at 5:30 a.m. to feed the cattle before school.

About a year ago, the boys tried to persuade their father to buy them a dune buggy. He nixed the idea because of the expense and because he thought they could build their own.

"I told them to find an older car for about $100 and I'd buy that so they could make a dune buggy out of it. They've spent about a year playing around with that thing and they've had a great time doing it."

The Darch menfolk are not the only members of the family with handyman skills, however.

Mrs. Darch once painted the entire exterior of the house and often makes minor repairs on her own household appliances.

"I have to do it myself because I can't seem to get any help around here," she said with a laugh.

Thus far, the Darches have faced attack from inflation on every front save one: their electric rates have not been raised.

They are consumer-members of Wake EMC, where electric rates have been held constant despite the rising cost of living. However, the cooperative expects the rates to go up early next year, following negotiation of a new contract with its major power supplier, Carolina Power and Light Co.

That prospect doesn't ruffle the Darches

"I'm in no position to argue with CP&L or Duke Power about their increased rates. I don't know what it takes to keep those generators running.

"But, I do want electricity in my home and on my farm, and if they need more money to keep those generators going, I certainly think they should get it."

Mr. and Mrs. Darch have developed their inflation strategy and weaponry as a means of surviving through many lean years.

Both natives of Ohio, they settled on the farm in 1952, soon after they finished at Ohio State University and were married.

Doug and friend had visited the state while at OSU and they liked what they saw.

"We came down out of the snow into beautiful weather because North Carolina had an unusually mild winter that year. The cows were grazing and the grass was green and there was a need for milk. It just looked like heaven to me.

"Well, the winters didn't turn out that way as a rule, but the milk market has been here most of the time. It's been a real good place to live."

They started with 16 cows and gradually built their herd to the 50 they have today, always raising their own replacements rather than buying from outside.

"When you run a farm and have six children to do for, you have to do a lot of things to make ends meet out of necessity," Mrs. Darch said.

Her husband nodded agreement, adding: "Farming is an up and down business. So we've had to work hard in order to make it. With this inflation, we're working longer and harder."

INFLATION:

THE BIG SQUEEZ

A special article beginning on page 5 gave a broad view of the impact of inflation in rural North Carolina as interpreted by representative EMC managers. On these two pages, we present in more detail three related interviews which point up more specifically the dilemma of electric cooperatives and the people they serve.

Everybody's Affected!

In agricultural counties, like those in which Halifax EMC of Enfield serves, inflation is compounded by shortages of such basic necessities as fertilizer and aggravated by declining farm prices.

"People in this area are very conscious of inflation," Thomas Bog Slade, III Halifax EMC's general manager, said. "We're in a farming community . . . Everybody's affected."

An article in the morning paper Slade had just received reported 30 percent nitrogen solution fertilizer for corn crops was selling at "excessive prices ranging from $150 to $240 per ton," compared with normal prices of $110 to $130 a ton. The article added, "many farmers are unable to obtain nitrogen solution" at any price.

"There's a great concern," Slade said. "I know farmers are not at all pleased that they're losing $20 a head when they sell cattle while the price of beef has come down very little in the supermaket."

Like the farmers and rural people it serves, Halifax EMC is caught in inflation's squeeze. A comparison of some of its costs includes these examples of increases between May 1971 and May 1974: gasoline, up 78% no. 2 triplex service wire, up 90%; 35-foot poles, up 118%; interest, up 120%; 8-foot crossarms, up 140%.

The cost of purchased power accounts for 37% of the EMC's expenditures. Halifax EMC buys the power it distributes from Virginia Electric Power Co. from Carolina Power and Light Co., and Southeastern Power Administration. Since 1971 its purchased, or wholesale, power costs have increased 63%.

"The thing that's really bothering us, and any other purchaser from VEPCO," Slade said, "is that the fuel charge has gone out of sight.

"The fuel charge at the beginning of this year was 1.2 mills. In May it was 6.4.

"If we didn't pass through the fuel charge (to consumer-members), we would lose $98,000 this year."

In budgeting for 1974, Halifax EMC initially, in December, 1973, anticipated a 13.7% increase in kilowatt hour sales and assumed its wholesale power costs would be about the same as in 1973. On that basis, the EMC would have had a 1974 margin of $98,000.

"We revised the budget when we saw what was happening to the fuel charge, allowed for a 5% increase in kwh sales," Slade said, "and figured the wholesale power costs would average out increasing 6 mills this year. When we did that, we came out with a net loss of $98,000."

In order to stay in business, to continue to meet the needs of its member-owners and to satisfy the financial criteria necessary to borrow money, a decision had to be made: The increased costs of purchased power had to be passed through the EMC's members.

"We found out," Slade said, "that if we passed the fuel charge through this would save us for this year."

People are Hurting

Alton P. Wall, general manager of Randolph EMC, Asheboro, enumerated examples of what inflation has done to the costs of electric service.

Interest costs, labor costs, the costs of materials and supplies, all have climbed, and in many cases are still climbing.

But Wall saw a more tragic consequence.

"We haven't even begun to ta
he said, laying aside for the mome
set of budget figures, "of where i
tion is hurting the worst: It's with
people who come in here and say
just can't pay my bill."'

Many of Randolph EMC's meml
are dependent on industrial payr
At least one member of the fa
works in industry. In most ca
they're getting cost-of-living increa

But economic uncertainty is re
ing in employment uncertainty in
dustry throughout the nation. La
nationally known industries have
off, or furloughed workers, and N
Carolina like other states is experi
ing the effects.

Randolph EMC serves what
calls "the heart of the North Caro
broiler belt." Like others in the p
try industry and North Carolina fa
ers generally, broiler producers
caught between inflated produc
costs and declining market prices.

"Their income is off," Wall said.

Then too, Randolph EMC al
with busines of every kind in the st
serves many people on fixed incons
For retired people and others on fi
incomes, inflation is particul
severe. As Wall puts it, "they're h
ing."

Randolph EMC's long range ca
improvement plan calls
expenditures totaling $18,404,
beginning 1974 and ending 1983.
present rates, the interest on
money involved will cost a me
5.6% – on the basis of 70% of
costing 5% and 30% costing 7%.
creased interest costs, Wall obser
are significant.

The increased costs of mater
labor and interest invested in plant
not, however, have the immed
effect on an EMC's finances
increased costs involved in operati
do.

Randolph EMC's payroll for op
tions, for example, increased f
$259,033 in 1969 to $343,401

1973. Some of the increase is due to growth: in 1969, the EMC served a monthly average of 10, 469 meters; in 1973, a monthly average of 12,616. Still, since 1970, the wages paid one key class of employees rose 34.3%.

As for materials, costs of conductor (wire, cable, etc., for overhead and underground applications) have doubled. Some have more than doubled, and prices are expected to continue rising.

A 35-foot class 6 pole cost between $20.71 and $22.24 in 1970. The last Wall bought in 1974 cost $52.52. A 50-foot class 3 pole cost $60.58 in 1970. The 1974 cost was $176.53, an increase of $115.95.

The largest item in EMC budgets is wholesale power costs. In North Carolina, electric cooperatives buy all the electricity they distribute – chiefly from Carolina Power & Light Co., Duke Power Co. and Virginia Electric Power Co. Beset by inflation and soaring fuel costs, all three companies have imposed wholesale rate increases and have further increases pending. The cooperatives have had no choice but to raise their rates as a consequence.

Randolph EMC put a rate increase into effect June 1. The minimum monthly charge was raised from $2 to $3.20. The charge for the first 100 kilowatt hours used went up to 30 cents. Above 100 kwh, the charge for each additional kwh became one-fourth of a cent.

"Except for the change in the minimum bill," Wall said, "the increase throughout is ¼ cent per kwh . . . on every user alike." He pointed out the new rate schedule is a step towards doing away with promotional rates that encourage high consumption of electricity and is designed to encourage energy conservation.

The new rate schedule also provides for a wholesale power cost adjustment. For each 0.1 of a mill variation above or below a wholesale power cost of 9.6 mills per kwh, consumer bills will be adjusted by 0.1 mills per kwh.

"The rate we have made so far is made to take care of inflation in costs of labor, rising costs of material and cost of money," Wall said. "There is no provision for increased cost of (wholesale) power other than the wholesale rate adjustment."

EAT, DRINK & BE MERRY, FOR TODAY INFLATION IS AT A 15.6% ANNUAL RATE
STEVE MILLER
"...CASHED IN MY SAVINGS ACCOUNT TODAY... COULDN'T AFFORD IT ANYMORE...."

Cartoon by Steve Miller, The News and Observer, Raleigh, N.C.

Will wholesale rate adjustments, or "pass-throughs" become general?

With the fuel clause increases put into effect by Duke and VEPCO, Wall said, electric cooperatives subject to fuel clauses will "just about have to" have some such provision in their rate schedules.

People are Bitter

Hugh A. Crigler, general manger of Davidson EMC, Lexington, was concerned by the effect of inflation on the mood and morale of people.

"People are getting bitter about the whole thing" he said. "Prices have gone up faster than income. Interest rates are so high housing has almost come to a standstill.

"So far there's no significant unemployment in the area, but the housing industry is hurting. The construction industry is beginning to hurt badly."

The pressures and uncertainties, Crigler has observed, are building resentments.

"You're getting individuals who are bitter about paying light bills," he said. "In fact, I don't see how many poeple make it. But you've either got to send out bills or go broke."

As a consumer-owned business, Davidson EMC shares the consumer's plight. Like other electric cooperatives, it is beset by rising costs and shortages.

Crigler estimated the cost of interest Davidson EMC pays has doubled since 1970. Taxes paid were up approximately 10%; the cost of materials have about doubled, and labor costs were up by about 31%. Crigler could cite comparable increases for virtually every item in the EMC budget.

The largest single budget expense – the cost of wholesale power, which Davidson EMC busy from Duke Power Company – has increased about 74% since 1971. Soaring fuel costs have resulted in Duke imposing a fuel clause. As fuel costs rise, Duke passes the increases along to the EMC. Thus, the 74% increase in the cost of wholesale power since 1970 well may grow to 100% before the year is much older. There is no way Davidson EMC can avoid passing the fuel clause adjustments along to its members and remain fiscally viable.

Still, Crigler noted, the price the consumer pays for electric services is moderate compared to the other highly inflated prices he pays, witnesses the price of gasoline. Yet, and Crigler was struck by the inconsistency of it: "People will wait in lines to buy gas and pay whatever is asked."

You can't blame people for being confused and vexed, though, Crigler said. The predicament of young people trying to get started and trying to buy or build homes particularly disturbs him. Inflated interest rates and the drain of inflated living costs on their incomes, he explained, make a home an unrealizable dream for many of them now.

"It's the young people, and the older people on fixed incomes," Crigler said, "who are the principal victims."

HOW TO BEAT INFLATION IF YOU HAVE THE TIME

The Carolina Homemaker
Edited by Brenda Sargent

There are many ways to beat inflation IF you have the time: Grow your own food, sew your own clothes, keep your appliances in repair and even build your own home. How-to information is at every hand when you can work its absorption into your schedule.

Inflation. It's a household word this year. Because we need to eat to live, and prefer roofs over our heads and clothes on our bodies, we are learning that inflation, though an intangible, is a very real thing. We are complaining about it, pulling in our belts because of it, fighting it.

Inflation, according to Webster, is "an increase in the volume of money and credit relative to available goods, resulting in a substantial and continuing rise in the general price level." The cure, of course, is very simple: Reduce the demand. How? By doing practically everything ourselves!

Here, the going gets more complicated because of the multiplicity of things in our lives. We do not want to lower our level of living and what once was a luxury to us now is a necessity. And the fingers of one hand almost can count our acquisitions, or the maintenance of these, that have not increased in cost in the last few months. Thus, living has become more difficult in every income bracket and survival precarious for those with the lowest incomes.

The answer again is in reducing the demand for material things and services by "doing-it" ourselves. And North Carolinians are particularly fortunate here: We are endowed generously with sources of information and help to cover every aspect of our lives. What we haven't learned in the school of hard knocks can be learned now with only minimum effort on our parts.

"Waste not, want not" is an old adage that can be applied to the do-it-yourself process. Do not attempt as an amateur, to repair or construct anything without first getting instruction either from an expert or from written material. Jack-leg efforts, without sufficient know-how can end more expensively than having hired out the work originally. Unfortunately, too, some jobs call for more extensive training and more specialized tools than the average consumer can afford. Here, again, knowledge of the do-it-yourself requirements will assist in the decision as to whether a trained technician should be called in.

And where is all this knowledge to help fight inflation? Instant help in solving problems is available at Agriculture Extension offices in each county of the state. County agents and home economists are trained to keep abreast of newest developments in money management, home maintenance, wise shopping and housekeeping in addition to areas related purely to agriculture. Assistance is available to individuals as well as families, merely for the asking. If necessary, agents will make house calls to give on-site advice and they can supply pamphlets on infinite number of subjects to supplement telephone or office calls.

Consumer education programs covering a multitude of subjects are offered generally over North Carolina by both the community colleges and technical institutes as occupational extension curricula. More importantly to the average citizen, most of these institutions will give courses on demand to classes with a minimum of 10 members, says Dr. Tom Dudley, director of adult services. In some areas, surveys are conducted periodically to determine consumer needs for course then these are advertised locally i newspapers and on the air. They usua ly are held at night and only a sma fee is charged.

"Our institutions offer many diffe ent short term courses," Dr. Dudle reports. "Just as important as learnir how to plant a garden and care for it finance. This sort of instruction ca help people know about making good loan to avoid excessive intere rates or how to use credit car wisely." In addition to the more pr saic garden-home subjects, Tar He community colleges and institut offer every service trade instructic that any consumer could possibl need: Handyman and small engir repairs, carpentry, masonry, plumbir – even shoe repair!

City and county libraries, as well bookstores, are sources of do-i yourself information also. There a magazines and digests, as well as har and paperback books being publishe in increasing numbers to meet tl growing demand of consumers f information in these inflationa times.

"Our people are prepared to giv specific help in regard to inflation says Mrs. Justine Rozier of the N. State University Family Resour Management Office.

Assisting consumers in making the dollars go farther is a constant obje tive of Mrs. Sarah Casper, head hon economist and house-furnishing spe ialist in Wake County. "Right now w are emphasizing the reduction energy in the home," she reports, "t still maintain comfort. We are teachir consumers how to maximize comfo and yet minimize cost" in the use the many home appliances. Econom of energy benefits both the consum in lower bills and the community, sh says.

For instance, use of washers ar

similar large machines at night when air conditioners are not turned to peak capacity, can help reduce brown-out possibility. "But some suggestions to save power don't make sense," she comments. "I have heard it suggested that the water heater be turned down, but then , this makes the water unsanitary for use in the dishwasher." So the extension people can give advice to right penny-wise and pound-foolish ventures.

Although the cost of yard goods has increased greatly, Mrs. Rozier believes home sewing produces "a saving comparatively as great as ever" and clothes more durable than ready-made. "We don't need as much clothing today," she said, "because we are more relaxed and take a more casual approach to what we wear."

Inflation has prompted many North Carolinians already to do more maintenance, more food production at home, more sewing of clothes, curtains and slip covers. Consumer interest increases steadily as we try to do more for ourselves to stretch incomes to help maintain our levels of living.

"More folks are trying to do their own plumbing," comments A.R. Burke, piping contractor of Raleigh, who says his basic supplies have gone up in cost 75 to 200 percent in the past year. Although he admits he has not raised his service call charge in that time, he thinks a majority of business offering home service have advanced their rates to take care of rises in transportation costs. R.M. Deutscher, customer service manager of Sears, Roebuck Company in Raleigh, says their basic service charge is up 20 percent in five years' time, "which is only enough to take care of our margin of profit."

Higher house call charges prompt many customers to attempt their own repairs. "A good many are buying parts from us," says Deutscher, "but some of them are messing up on it." He discounts the parts sales increase as being anti-inflation, saying that although Sears is selling more parts now, its sale of appliances likewise has increased, so the percentage between them is about the same. Knowledgable customers take hard-to-repair items to the warehouse for reworking and save a few dollars on the basic service charge, although labor costs at the warehouse are the same as in the home.

"Always in recent memory we had a heavy demand for information," says Lanny Parker, Wake County Libraries reference department head. *Consumer Reports* and *Consumer Digest* are the most heavily used of the consumer publications. And we do have more material now," he continued. *Consumer Index* is a new magazine aimed at economic goods and *Consumer Complaint Guide* a how-to for gaining restitution for unsatisfactory items purchased.

Librarians at Raleigh's Village Book Store have no statistics on consumer-oriented volumes, but said "we always have a lot of books on how-to." Then they point to shelves full of hard- and paperbacked books on subjects like "Home Guide to Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning," "How to Beat the High Cost of Owning and Operating Your Home" and "Home Repairs Without a Man."

"There are numbers of things we can hardly afford any more to have done for us," said Mrs. Casper. "Hanging wallpaper is an example, or refinishing furniture. Home gardening can be very expensive, too, without help from experts." Extension agents are prepared to lend assistance in practically every consumer area, she reiterated. "But the real crux of the matter is so few people have the time to 'do-it' themselves."

Over the years, inventors have given us innumerable labor-saving devices and machines. Medicine has come up with tranquilizers and longer life spans. Farmers have grown more soybeans from which the food scientists have made additives to stretch the hamburgers we eat. Changing modes in work habits invite us to increased recreational activities.

And more money and credit than there are goods available give us our inflationary trend! But where has time gone with which to fight it? Time, it can be deduced, is the most inflated intangible of our lives!

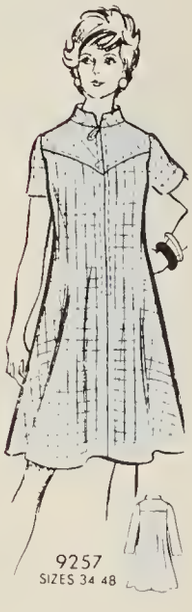
— Mary Dudley Price

"Rest assured, I'm watching it all the time"

Herblock in The Washington Post

Cartoon by Steve Miller, The News and Observer, Raleigh, N.C.

FASHION FAVORITES



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ABOUT THE HOUSE

DRYER FABRIC CONDITIONER MAY BE HARMFUL

Some fabric softeners or anto-stat conditioners for use in automa dryers may damage the dryer or yo clothes, and could possibly result premature failure of the appliance.

A recent report by the Gene Electric Company, one of seve home laundry manufacturers to spe out on the subject, pointed out t evaluation of Hotpoint and GE dry – in which various dryer-applied c ditioners have been used – show t the conditioners can cause one more of the following problems:

--Malfunction of the dryness s sors, which could result in prolon or erratic drying cycles.

--Excessive lint build-up inside dryer or in the ducting. Excessive build-up in the area of the heat coils on electric models or the comb tion chamber on gas models co possibly result in the ignition of lint, and sparks could get into dryer load.

--Spotting of clothes, due to build-up of the conditioner on dryer drum.

--Deterioration of painted or galv ized interior finishes, allowing underlying metal surfaces to rust necessitating premature dryer repla ment.

General Electric noted that pro lems caused by the use of dry applied conditioners are not cove by warranties or extended ser contracts since they do not result fr defects in material and workmans

There is no indication that licid fabric conditioners used in clo washers cause any of these same pro lems in dryers.

Although new dry-applied co tioners are being developed and for u lations of presently- available ones re being changed, the homemaker wo be well advised to seek assura from the manufacturer of any fa softener or anti-static conditioner a the product can be used safely and ill not produce any ill effects on dry

KITCHEN CORNER

A MESS OF POTTAGE

"Bible Soup," the speciality of the house this month, was so named by its sender, Mrs. Kathryne Holden of Boone. She chose the name because the soup is made from lentils which are frequently mentioned in the Bible and because it is the soup referred to as "a mess of pottage" for which Esau sold his birthright to his brother, Jacob.

The people of the Near East still make this soup today the same way it was made long ago; however, they frequently add lamb or mutton. Mrs Holden suggests using soy sauce as an inexpensive substitute unless you happen have a soup bone handy.

She writes that the only real difference in her soup and the ancient one is the use of soybeans. That it's good and inexpensive there can be no doubt, for the Holdens ate it for lunch nearly every day for two years while Kathryne was helping to put her husband through college!

The Holdens are members of Blue Ridge EMC.

If you have a favorite recipe that you would like to share through this column, send it to: Brenda Sargent, Kitchen Corner, P.O. Box 1699, Raleigh, N.C. 27602. Tell us something about the recipe and any helpful tips you have discovered in preparing it, your family and the name of the EMC that serves you. We pay $2 for the recipe chosen monthly for this column.

CAROLINA COUNTRY RECIPE

Bible Soup

Submitted by Mrs. Kathryne Holden, Rt. 2, Boone, N.C.

- 2½ cups lentils
- 1 cup soybeans
- 2-3 carrots
- 2-3 onions
- 2 stalks celery
- ½ cup parsley (or ¼ cup dried parsley
- ¼ cup cooking oil
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp. oregano
- 1 tsp. basil
- 1 tsp. rosemary, crumbled
- ¼ to ½ cup soy sauce (or soup bone; or Polish Sausage
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- 2 tsp. salt

Wash soybeans, cover with water and bring to a boil, simmering for 40 min. Then grind or run through blender, using the remaining cooking water. Meantime, wash lentils and place in a 5-qt. kettle covered with 1½ inches of water. Chop carrots, onions, celery and parsley fine and add to lentils. Add ground soybeans to lentils. Add spices, oil, soy sauce, pepper and salt and bring to boil, then turn down to simmer for about 45 min. Add more water during cooking if necessary, but soup should be fairly thick. Makes 3-4 quarts and is best if allowed to stand overnight.

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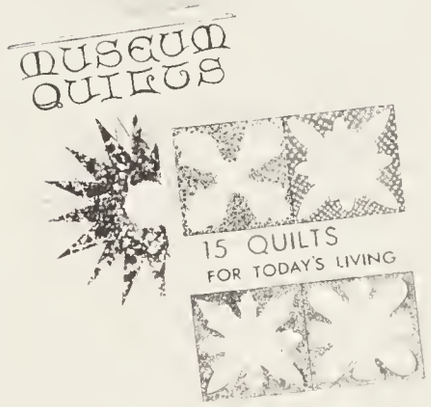

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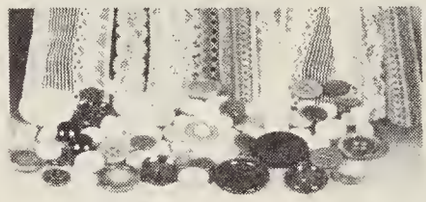

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PEOPLE

Governor Holshouser has brought the board of the N.C. Rural Electrification Authority to full strength by filling three vacancies. **Donald R. Beason**, Surry County native, was appointed State REA chariman in addition to his duties as deputy secretary of the N.C. Department of Commerce. Appointed at the same time as members of the REA board were **Worthy Blaine Teague Jr.** of Rt. 2, Liberty and **William Elmer Miller** of Rt. 1, Blowing Rock. The terms of the three new REA appointees will expire June 5, 1977. Other members of the REA board are **J.C. Thompson** of Rt. 3, Mt. Gilead; **Walter S. Smiley** of Rt. 1, Macon, and **Robert G. Holden** of Rt. 2, Robbins.

Beason graduated from Mt. Airy High School in 1957, served two years in the Army, mainly in the Hartford, Conn. area, and completed his education with a bachelor's degree from the University of Connecticut in 1963. Following graduation, he became a sales consultant in Charlotte. He has served in the Holshouser Administration as deputy secretary of commerce since January 1973. Beason is married to the former Janet Thacker of Surry County. They have a son, 13, and a daughter, 9.

Joe Patterson of Mt. Airy has jointed the State REA staff as public utilities engineer, succeeding **Chick Horney**, retired.

J.C. Brown Jr. a former editor of this magazine and former general manager of N.C. EMC, has become editor of NRECA's two major publications, *Rural Electrification* magazine and *Rural Electric Newsletter.* Brown left North C olina to join NRECA in 1973. He v NRECA's senior government pol specialist. He succeeds **Dick Pen** also a former of this magazine, w became NCREA's publications dir tor.

Derl J. Hinson, native of Loris, S.C., graduate of Clemson University and former general manager of Morgan County Rural Electric Membership Corporation, Martinsville, Ind., assumed duties August 1 as general manager of Lum River EMC, Red Springs. He succe **Charles Staples** who resigned become general manager of Fox Cr EMC in Lawrenceburg, Ky. Whil Indiana, Hinson was president of Indiana Friends of Rural Elect cation and vice president of the I ana Managers Association. Before n ing to Indiana, he was district man of Jackson EMC, Gainesville, Ga. has also served as director of Kentucky state association (Kentu RECC.) Hinson and his wife, the mer Angelyn Grainger of Loris, S have two daughters, Angelyn R 14, and Penelope Dennis, 12.

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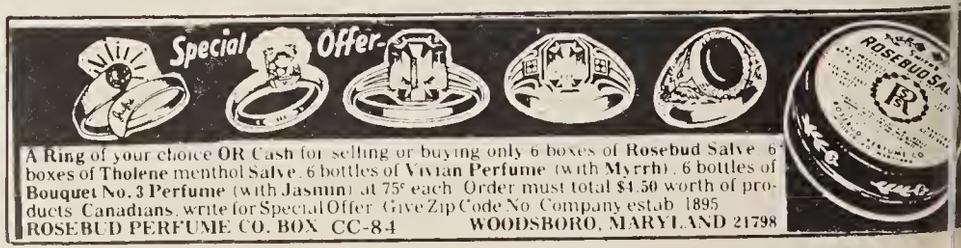

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VERSES FROM OUR READERS

Glow of Nature

ver watched a stream of sunlight flood a new
plowed field,
new budded leaves make shadows that
danced and couldn't be still,
a pretty redbird with its scarlet dress?
owever weary one might be,
gives a soul a rest.

thin, I quietly marvel at flowers in the sun.
ey make life more rewarding as to and
fro I run.
is is riches in itself,
ing nature at her best.
ed and weary tho I may be,
ives my soul a rest.

nemory, the scene of a farmer mopping
a sweaty brow,
d and weary from the field he'd had to
plow.
day's work behind him,
vatched the sunset in the west.
with all its glow of brilliance,
ve his soul a rest.

Ruby Saunders
Hertford

Faithful Friend

outh, our friends are manifold;
drift apart as years expend.
reciate, when you are old,
one who stays till journey's end!

Paul Ellis Bowman
Hickory

UP Time

Bubbly
Spirits at
Dawn!
Excitement,
He's Got!

The
difference
is Age!
He's Three
And, I'm NOT!

Dorothy C. Isbell
Boone

Kittens

Kittens are playful,
young and gay;
Kittens don't have
much to say.
I love kittens, don't you?
I don't know what
I'd do without them.

Kittens are loving,
tender and sweet;
Playing with yarn
wrapped around their feet.
I just love kittens
with their mittens.
Kittens make the cat.

Laura Knight
Broadway

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TEEN ROUNDTABLE

Teen Roundtable takes on a new look this month as we present a special feature on the 1974 Youth Tour to Washington. We believe our young readers will be very much interested in the many activities which were included in the tour—and in how some of the Tourists reacted to the trip, Teen Roundtable will resume its usual question-and-answer format next month.

Breakfast with North Carolina's Congressmen . . . the FBI building . . . Arlington National Cemetery . . . a play at Kennedy Center . . . a boat ride on the Potomac . . . National Rural Electric Youth Day.

These were among the highlights of the 1974 National Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, June 10-14.

Thirty-two North Carolina high school students representing 13 EMCs were among more than 900 young people from 23 states on the tour. The Tar Heel group included five chaperones.

"The trip was extremely enjoyable as well as educational," said Sheila Mathis of Rt. 3, North Wilkesboro, who was one of five students on the tour representing Blue Ridge EMC.

"These have been the best five days of my life," she added.

Diana (Winky) Haynes of Rt. 3, Wake Forest, a tourist from Wake EMC, said, "I loved everything about the trip. I haven't had more fun anywhere!" She said she most enjoyed the play, the boat ride and a dance which was held for all Youth Tourists from across the country.

Dee Mc Namara of Kernersville, who represented Davidson EMC, called it an "excellent tour."

"This has been the best youth tour I've ever participated in, including the National 4-H Congress."

Dee, who spoke at the Congressional Breakfast at the Capitol, listed that event as one of the highlights of the week for her.

Terri Moore of Laurinburg with Rep. Earl Ruth.

Kim Evans of Ash chats with Gloria Currie of Rep. Walter Jones' staff.

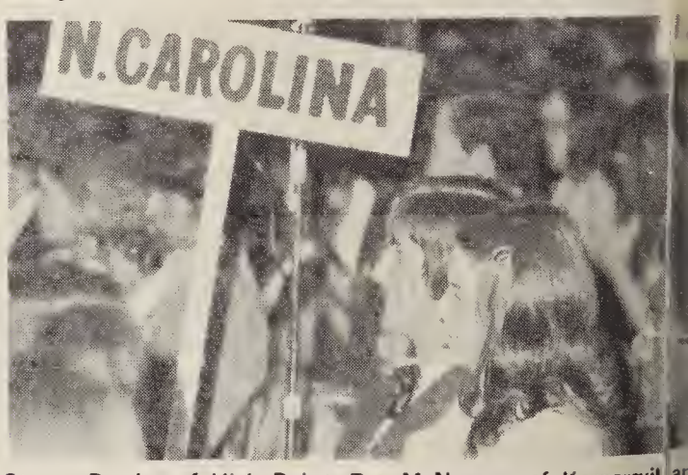
Other stops on the tour included the Washing Lincoln and Jefferson monuments; the Custis-Lee Man and Mt. Vernon; the National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, the White House, the Nati Wax Museum and NRECA headquarters.

Youth tourists are chosen to participate in the an trip by various EMCs, using essay contests or o selection procedures.

The EMCs participating in the 1974 Youth Tour w Blue Ridge, Brunswick, Carteret-Craven, Central, David Four County, French Broad, Jones-Onslow, Lumbee R Randolph, Surry-Yadkin, Tideland and Wake.

Diane Deese of Maxton, Anna Myers of Pantego and Jeffery J of Maxton greet Rep. L. H. Fountain at Congressional Breakfas

Jessica Huneycutt of Pittsboro poses a question for pa Congressmen at National Rural Electric Youth Day program.



Steven Pendry of High Point, Dee McNamara of Kernersvil Wesley Boykin of Warsaw at National Rural Electric Yout Program.

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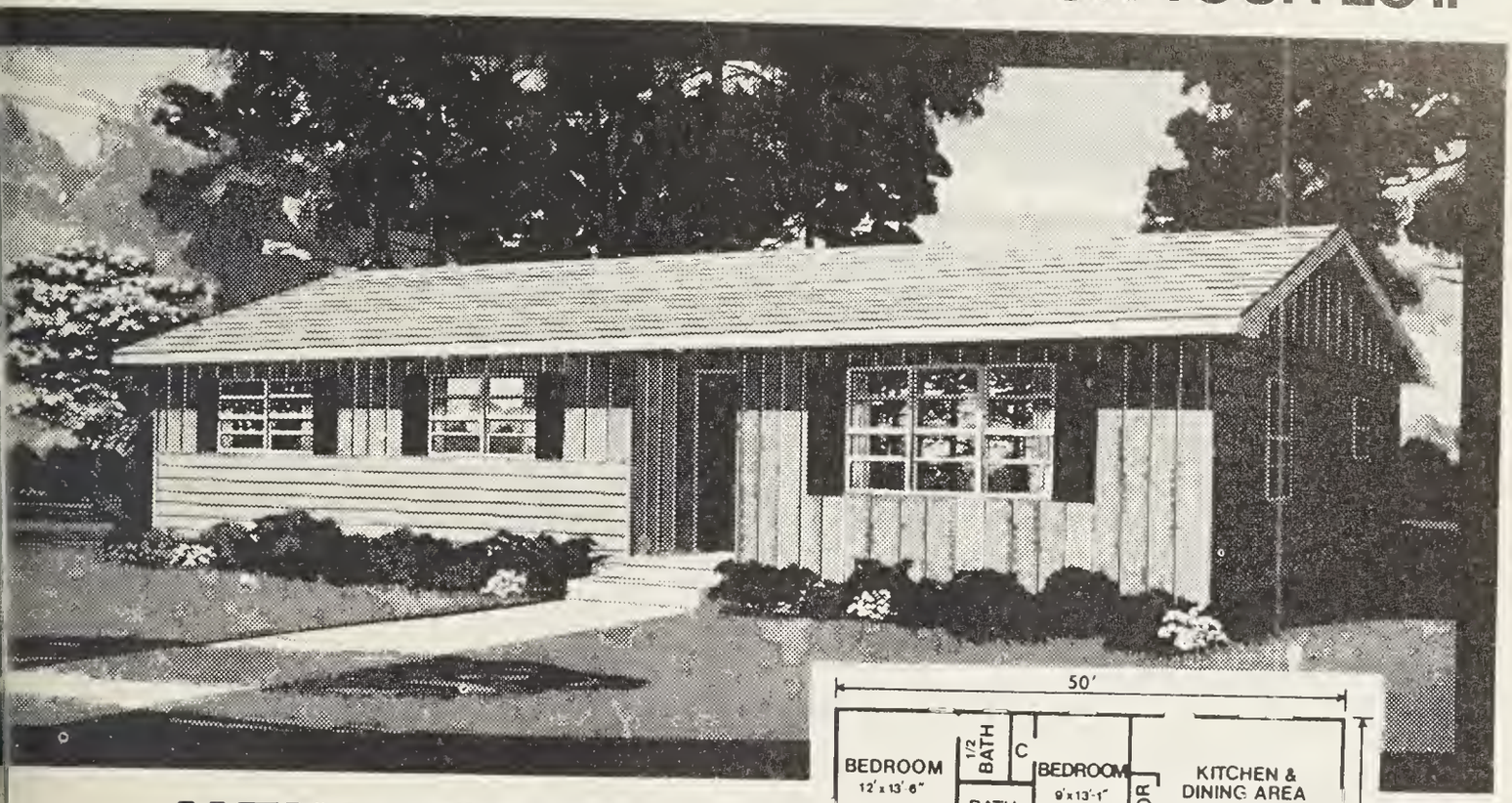

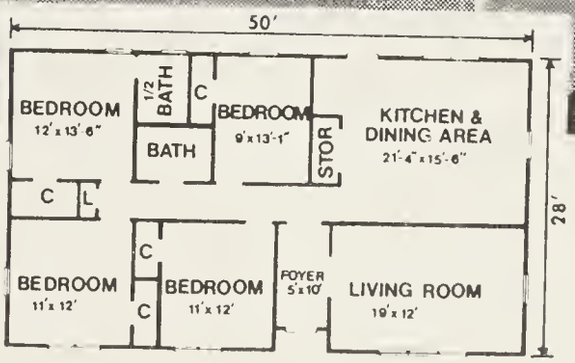

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OYSTERS FOR EVERYONE

By Peggy Payne

Henderson Miles explains the workings of an oyster dredge

When you're used to tackling oysters by the dozen, or maybe by the peck, it's a shock to go into the back rooms of the Rose Bay Oyster House and see brimming vats of them, oysters by the slippery sloshy thousands.

Served by the Tideland Electric Membership Corporation, Rose Bay Oyster is one of about 20 shucking houses in North Carolina now, according to Jim Brown of the Division of Commercial and Sports Fisheries. It's the only one in the state that has its own oyster beds, he added. The house harvests 200 acres of prime grounds.

About 150 gallons of oysters are shucked a day by this operation. And it has been in operation for over 30 years, according Henderson Miles, one of the managers.

Miles led a tour through the site recently, explaining how the oysters go from oyster rock sound bottom to the company's rose pink cans.

They are harvested with an oyster dredge, a netting apparatus on the back of a boat. This can be a small shrimp boat or a smaller boat built particularly for oystering. The problem is size. The boat has to be able to turn in a small area, so the nets can work back and forth over an area.

The house is supplied by about half a dozen boats. From the dock the oysters go to the benches in a long shucking room. The day we visited the house 19 shuckers had just finished their day. "The women come in at quarter to five and start shucking," Miles explained. "Usually they shuck out at two o'clock."

They sit in a long row of stalls. Each shucker has two buckets on her right, one for select and one for standard oysters. The select oysters are larger.

Then oysters are taken to vats for washing. They spew from one vat to the other in a steady stream. At another table they are canned and sealed.

Two trucks go out to deliver them to Morehead City, Nags Head, Greenville, Wilson, and other areas. Most of the business is wholesale, to restaurants and grocery stores. But they also sell retail.

Oysters pour from the washer

The oysters come from Pamli Sound. The season runs from mid-O tober to mid-March. But the Rose B company also sells other seafo Shrimp season opens around the of July. And there's an open sea of fish year round. But oysters co prise the main part of this busines

According to Miles there are ab four houses in his area. But mos the 20 in the state are in Brunsw County, Brown said.

Oysters used to be a big busi in North Carolina, but it's one that been long declining, Brown ad Twenty or 30 years ago it was a to $2 million business here, he s Now it's closer to $400,000 a y And the main reason for this is depletion of oysters.

A big problem is the substrate the oysters to live on. The yo oyster swims around for the first 1 12 days of his life. Then he ei finds a place to attach himself o dies. Usually he fastens to ano oyster shell. But most of the botto now sand, Brown said. There's enough to hang on to.

Taking oysters out without put shells back is the cause of the short In nature when an oyster dies, shell is still there. But when oyster

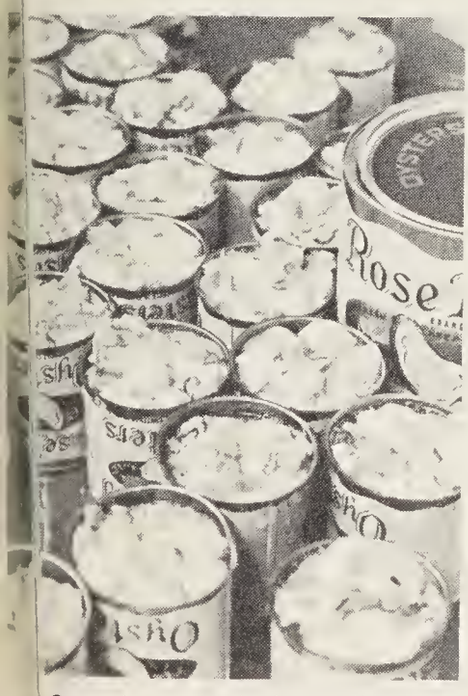
being served on the half shell, the shell loses this natural function.

North Carolina has a program of "oyster rehab," of putting shells back in the water. About 125,000 bushels a year are returned to about 16 oyster management areas. Each of these covers 50 to 100 acres of water. But this is a very small program compared to that of some states, Brown said. Virginia puts back about two million bushels of shells a year.

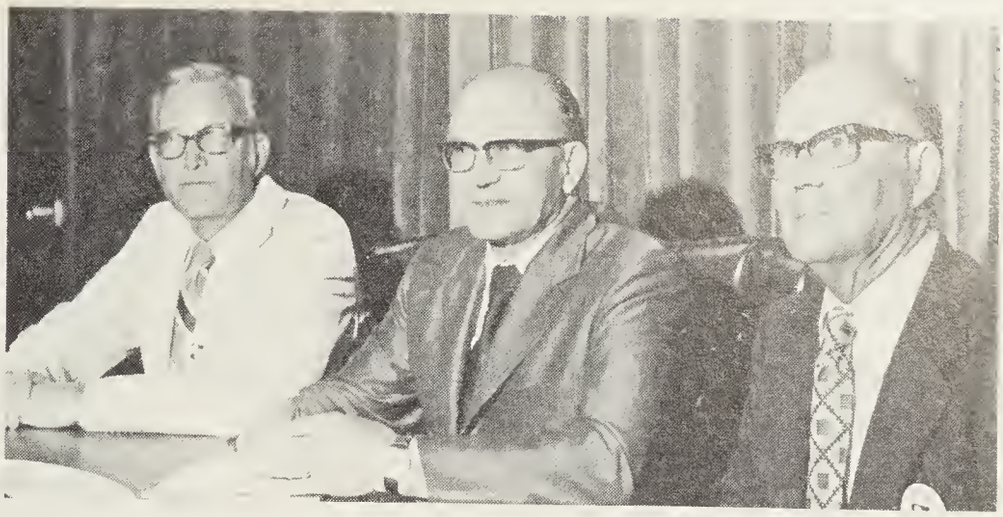
Another problem in oyster harvesting is pollution, Brown said. Pollution has closed large areas for shellfishing.

Oysters are filter feeders. They eat what they strain out of about 40 quarts of water they pump through their system each day. Whatever pollution is in their waters they get a taste . So waters are closed for shellfishing fore they are closed for swimming d other uses.

There are now about 660,000 acres water in this state which have been closed unsafe for shellfishing because of polution. Ten years ago there re 27 acres. Brown cautions that s figure is misleading, because much ter has been classified in that period t was never classified at all before. own sees a good future for North olina in oystering, if some of these blems can be solved. "Pamlico nd has the potential for a tremendc number of oysters. This has not n touched," he said. More oyster lls and less pollution is what he says ill take.



Succulence ready for sealing



REA Administrator David A. Hamil (center) came down from Washington, D.C. for an "Open House" Jones-Onslow EMC held at its new headquarters building and warehouse at the Western Boulevard complex in Jacksonville. The occasion marked the EMC's 35th anniversary. Hamil is shown with Alvin Morton, Jones-Onslow EMC manager, and Board President Archie Horne in Jones-Onslow EMC's new board room.

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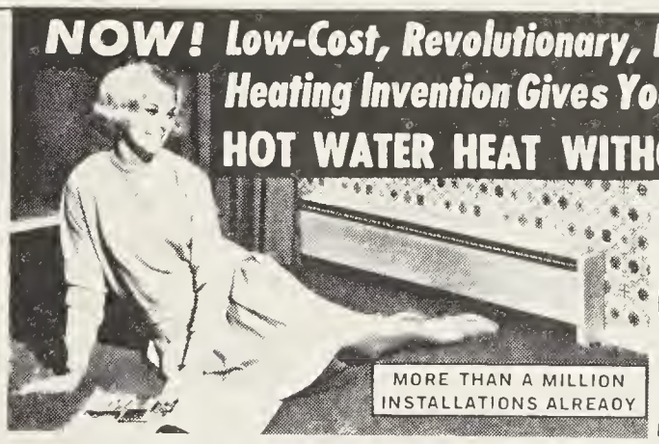

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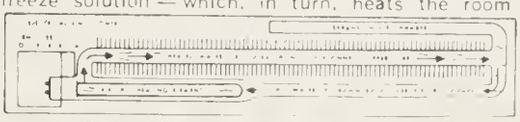

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